Housing

342 The type of house, whether big or lowly, made a difference in the comfort and care of women. The big houses were teak-paneled and floored with a good roof of thatch, tile or corrugated iron. Their high piles insured dryness during flood season. The sleeping and living space was a single airy open room, often with one or two sides balustraded rather than solid, and protected from the weather by the roof's overhang. The kitchen was sometimes a separate room. There was always one small enclosed room, perhaps ten feet square, or larger, with a door and a window. This room was used for keeping valuables under lock, and whenever privacy was desired: as a marriage chamber for bride and groom, or as a quiet room for a senile parent. Because of its almost solid walls, it was poorly ventilated and hot. Childbirth took place in this little room, if convenient, or out in the main part of the house. The fire-rest was in this room so that the dreaded wind could be kept out.

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342 The poor lived in modest earth-floored cottages of bamboo
184 frame, thatch sides and roof, with one or two raised wood plat-
352 forms for sleeping and sitting. In the rainy season, these
844 cottages could be damp. In fact, one October the water was observed ankle deep inside a house, and the wife splashed around at her chores. Under the latter conditions, a woman in childbirth would be moved to some kinsmen's house. Delivery took place on one of the sleeping platforms, and post-partum rest was on a plank raised off the earth floor, unless space permitted that the plank and temporary fire-floor be placed on the platform. On one observed occasion reed mats as protection from drafts were temporarily set up, making an enclosure about three feet high within which a mother lay in her post-partum rest period.

Cash

434 Cash was short to everyone. The poor felt very poor and
426 the rich did not feel rich. This was because the rice-money,
[556] which came in a lump sum once or twice a year, was at once turned over to clear debts, to make large purchases of agricultural equipment, to repair the house, or to perform elaborate ceremonies. What was left over was not kept around the house for day-to-day expenses for fear of robbery, but was immediately loaned out. Thus cash was not available for emergencies
434 which in childbirth might mean taxis or hospital care. Being
844 rich or poor made little difference in Bang Chan, however, as
556 to the quality of the obstetrical help given.

597 Adoption was fairly common, though not always of lasting satisfaction. On the other hand, in this watery domain, the
842 trouble (lambāk) in raising children, mostly involving
855 ceaseless tending, was such that a childless woman was accorded a little surface envy as one who had missed or avoided a lot of trouble. The attitude towards twins was
845 ambivalent. "Twins are unlucky because there are more mouths to feed, more labour, trouble, and not enough milk. With twins, a poor family will never rise again." "No one will marry a twin for fear of begetting twins." "If twins are of a different sex, one must die." Yet others considered twins lucky "because they could be nursed at the same time, and given the same things."

855 Wealth differences also affected these attitudes,
842 especially if babies came in close succession. Comments heard were: "Why do poor people have more children than the rich?" "Many visitors come bringing gifts to a rich parturient
• 184 because she is respected. No one likes to talk to a poor person." "Those who have a baby oftener than every 3 years will never be rich. Fortunately, 4 of my 7 children died." The increasing cost of raising children was a concern. In one of the few families that had plans for their children's education, the father underwent a vasectomy after his 9 fine children were born, because he "feared he would not be able to feed them all." His wife, reassured that the operation had not "hurt" her husband, "was glad he had done so."

847 Abortifacients and Contraceptives

Episodes concerning abortifacients were whispered about
[779] both Muslims and Buddhists. A Buddhist who induced abortion was seen as impeding an individual's rebirth and disobeying a religious prohibition on taking life, tenets which did not obtain among the Muslims. Abortifacient medicines to be used with abdomen-pressing were quietly sold by Muslims.[6] "Unmarried Muslim girls use them mostly," reported one Buddhist, "and they almost die in the process." A Buddhist curer had similar expensive medicine, but "unlike the Muslims, he will
842 not destroy the baby." Chinese boat-vendors also carried contraceptive medicines (yā) which were secretly discussed by wives. A husband reported his wife as saying, "Old ways

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6. Fraser (193) reports that in the Muslim village of Rusembilan, abortions were openly practiced, (as if part of a Muslim cultural heritage).

Chapter II

MAN AND WORLD

771 Bang Chan had for years heard preaching from Buddhist scriptures. Co-existing with these teachings were Hindu elements referring to Brahma, Shiva, and others. People [192] also believed in an animistic lore concerning frightening ghosts and spirits (phī), protecting deities (thēwadā), maternal goddesses, princely spirit-lords, and other supernatural guardians of a more or less benevolent nature. To these beliefs were added special bodies of knowledge, such as sacred literature from India and traditions of astrology from both China[8] and India. Other elements might be traced to Muslim influence, just as Muslims shared some of the foregoing references with their Buddhist neighbors. Bang Chan shaped its views of nature and man from all these sources. However, we shall not try in what follows to specify the sources of its beliefs.

826 774 • 184 192 The Human Body

The body of flesh, blood, bones, and other materials, harbored the noncorporeal aspects, in particular a person's merit store (kam; Skr: karma) and his several souls, viz., the khwan, the winyan, and the four chēttephūt (cf. J.R. Hanks, 1959). Views of the human body formed no unitary system, but were as varied as their origins. Thus, sometimes villagers distinguished the material from the non-material: "a human being is composed of two aspects: rūp (body) and arūp (non-body)." Sometimes learned persons referred to the Hindu-Buddhist concept of 32 parts of the body, one of which, the winyān-soul, was the "organizer" of the others.

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8. No trace was discovered of the Chinese concept of Yin as female, dark, cold, and evil, etc., and Yang as its opposite.

[115] 9. Ming (Mc.F. 880) was once given as a term for "soul" by a Muslim informant, but without further information.

843 262 [184] sin for the sake of nourishing the child. Some Thai village women followed a local Chinese belief that eating a female chicken gave strength during pregnancy. Eating a rooster, though, caused miscarriage through "estopic gestation." Thai Muslims recommended chicken whole-heartedly.

843 278 Medicines

Beginning early in pregnancy, one or more kinds of medicine (yā) were taken. These hot-tasting medicines of ginger, galanga, pepper, and such in 28 per cent alcohol were either bought from the big selection at a Chinese drugstore, or were made up at home from alcohol or water and an envelope of ingredients. A woman made the choice herself with the advice of experienced persons. Even the Muslims who ordinarily frowned on alcohol permitted their women to take it at this time. A few women, though, said they "did not like to get drunk," so took their medicines in hot water. The quantity varied from two to six spoonfuls per day, with big increases as delivery approached, e.g. "two big cups a day of it during the ninth month."

The primary purpose of medicine was to increase the appetite, but there were other reasons. Fragrant Medicine (yā hausum) cured wind. One Muslim midwife's mixture "stimulated the amniotic fluid." Other preparations had more general objectives. One label advertised "strength and good blood to men and beauty to women;" another promised to "maintain the mother's body and make the inner organs do their work properly" (H.M.H.).

In the last months, the reason for the medicines was to build up the body's heat. This purpose was not affected by hot tastes, which burned but did not necessarily raise the heat, but rather by alcohol, cobra, and specific decoctions. A label cautioned, though, "Not to be used by pregnant women with fever," lest the increment of heat be excessive. Snake Brand medicine, an exceedingly hot concoction used primarily post-partum, was occasionally taken in mild dosage during pregnancy. (Used full strength it caused miscarriage, so was rumored to induce abortion). The heat raised the body's temperature far above the ordinarily desired coolness so as to implement birth.

844 826 The Physiology of Birth

At parturition the body's usual needs were reversed. The child could not be ejected under the normal, cool condition of the body. The pushing and pulling winds inside the body that ordinarily circulated slowly had to be

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greater, for relatives were at hand. Some of these ordinary persons developed skills of considerable consequence.

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If difficulties developed, then a more experienced person, perferably a midwife, was needed. But many a midwife assisted at normal births. Because difficulties might arise from a deficiency of merit either in the mother or the child (one could never know which), many women preferred to have in attendance, for peace of mind, either a midwife or an experienced person to insure the presence of expert help. Sometimes they were engaged in advance, more often just sent for "as pain is increasing," it being not always certain whether the case was normal or not.

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A few women were delivered at the Mīnburī Health Center. These were rarely normal cases. The Center was turned to as a last resort in dire circumstances, with the result that sometimes the woman died in the boat on the way. A few persons of rather more modern outlook, such as wealthy farmers, teachers, and traders, had been delivered there and recognized its usefulness.

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The midwives lived in all parts of the community, with 3 in the populous central temple area. No one was more than a half-hour's paddle, or an hour's walk from the home of some midwife. What was desired, however, was a particular person, even though he might not be the most accessible one.

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Since midwives were all heads of large families their clientele was mostly their kinsmen. They also took care of non-kin who lived in their locality. A daughter or other close relative who had married out would be attended wherever she was, if she did not return home for confinement.

In choosing a midwife, a parturient sought out not only skill but favored a kinsman over a non-kinsman, a close relative over a distant one, a near person over a far.[63] Occasionally, to sustain an image of progressiveness, social superiority or of wealth display, a midwife from outside Bang Chan was imported. Sometimes proximity, convenience, and

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63. A male and 2 female kinsmen-midwives were called by the man's sister to deliver her, and all came. He did not deliver her because she was "too close a relative," but he said a brother "could deliver a sister."

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affection overrode kinship.[64] Thus affinal relatives and non-kin neighbors were also requested to assist. Buddhists attended Muslims and vice-versa, (though Muslim women preferred female assistance).

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In emergencies the professional midwives' area was the whole community. They travelled long distances to attend women who were not close kin. No parturient, however, even in an emergency, was ever attended by a complete stranger. In all likelihood, every adult in the community knew the midwives at least by sight.

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As to the size of the practices, reported activities ranged from the Muslim midwife's estimate of 10 per year, down to 2 or 3 per year.[65] The 2 men and the most competent female midwife reported about 4 per year, a figure probably weighted on the side of the difficult cases per year. It is noteworthy that the men, in spite of being as we shall see both mǒ and midwife, did not have larger [462] practices than the women. It was considered basically a woman's skill.

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None of the midwives derived much income from their practices, nor did they expect it to be significant. Their main income came from rice-growing from which, however, the women and one of the males had largely retired because of age. The other male midwife was exceptionally busy as a labor contractor, builder of houses, land-owner, and headman as well. The midwives found the 5 to 30 baht offered

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64. Two teachers who were in the kinship category of granddaughter (lăn) to the 3 best midwives, and lived only a few hundred yards from them, were delivered by a woman who was mother-in-law to one and husband's older sister to the other and who was "not a midwife but knows how." Since labor was quick and normal, no higher help was necessary. On the other hand, all 3 of these midwives turned up to help at the confinement of another cherished "granddaughter." Only one of them actually delivered the infant but other functions were diplomatically divided up by the young mother.

65. Hauck studied 86 babies, aged up to 3 and so not all born in one year. Thirty-one were delivered by 4 of the professional female midwives (12,9,7,3 respectively); a male midwife and an "experienced" person had done 2 each; 11 [R02] women, one each (Hauck, 1959:61). A few of the latter 11 [571] were ordinary kin, not midwives.

Chapter VII

ATTITUDES TOWARD MODERN MEDICINE AND MIDWIFERY

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Modern and traditional medicine appeared to Bang Chan to have much in common. Both subscribed to a belief in disruptive intrusions. In typhoid and cholera, the old scheme postulated intrusions of fire and earth. Boils involved a spirit attack or excess of fire. For these same disorders, new medicine spoke instead of virus or bacterial infection. Such concepts as nutritional deficiencies, insect transmission, and pollution, however, were alien to the old views as disease agents.

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Modern medicines paralleled the old decoctions. Antibiotics, ointments, or pain-pills were appreciated for their efficacy, but evoked no surprise, for every plant in the world was said to have some therapeutic value. Injections were similar to the sub-cutaneous magical protective needle.

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"Old" medicine did not feel threatened because people were not convinced that the modern was better. The 2 systems were viewed as different, each having its own specialties. The difference was sometimes phrased as "Old medicine cares for old ailments, modern medicine for new ones." Spirit possession and khun attack, for instance, were old ailments; poliomyelitis, gonorrhea, and maybe diphtheria, new (J.R. Hanks, 1955:155-195). It was sometimes better not to claim competence outside these customary lines. One mō said he could cure gonorrhea, but the young men preferred a city doctor. Sometimes, though, one could not be sure what was a new disease.

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Another phrasing of the proper place for modern medicine was that because of varying "habit," differing social stations required differing medical techniques. "Modern medicine is only good for delicate city people or other kinds of farmers, but does not give enough strength for rice-farmers." The orchardists below Bangkok who "had the habit of eating a lot of fruit," and the teachers and traders of Bang Chan (who went to the second class practitioners, and occasionally to modern doctors) were assumed to have different physical needs than farmers. The post-partum fire was clung to as strength-making: "woman are weak if no fire." The hot ashes chamber, introduced from Bangkok, was for the most part used by non-farm women.

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to make use of modern facilities one suffered confusing and unhappy experiences. Bangkok traffic was dizzying, even if one knew just where to go. Hospitals had beds, not mats, and the personnel were strangers. Foods were often unfamiliar or violated traditional injunctions concerning heating and cooling. People were brusque, impersonal, and overbearing to country people. One woman complained, "I am afraid of the doctor there. She scolds me and does not treat me like city people. She will not explain what the sickness is." Minburī's clinic was small, set up in more familiar terms, and the staff known personally to many villagers.

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Finally, there was the problem of finding an experienced escort, i.e. someone who "knew the way." More was involved than just convenience. In all walks of Bang Chan's life, no one ever presented himself to a school, to a household, anywhere, without a personal introduction from someone who had been there before, and so was accustomed (khoei) to it. It was not hard to find someone who had been to the Minburī Health Center, but it was difficult to find one who had been to a hospital in Bangkok, knew what to do, and had the time, money, and inclination to act as escort. The latter was always a relative by blood or marriage or the sick person's mō himself (Hanks and Hanks, 1955: 160). Actually, five or ten persons might accompany an ill person, only one of which was acting as the recognized go-between. Many of those who had been to a hospital or clinic as patients had previously accompanied others merely as escort, or to visit (Goldsen and Ralis 1955:31).

758 743 184 178 [369] [844] [554]

Who had actually tried modern medicine for one reason or another? About a third of the household heads had used some modern clinic or hospital for treatment or hospitalization (Goldsen and Ralis 1955:31). Use was more frequent among (1) the literate, (2) those exposed to the mass media of radio and movies, (3) those accepting certain urban ways, and (4) those having greater contacts with the city in the way of visits, but users were not of a noticeably higher economic level (ibid:37). Women went no more frequently than men (ibid:32). No figures indicated how many of these occasions were for childbirth, but our interviews point to a small number. Taking the will for the deed, two women teachers who appeared to be the first to plan ahead to be delivered at the Minburī Health Center--but who did not get there because labor was too quick--seemed to be viewing the use of modern methods as a means to higher status.

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Why was modern obstetrics so largely eschewed? What had been Bang Chan's experience, unfavorable or favorable, that colored their attitudes? First, home was the most convenient place for care. Bangkok was ruled out categorically as too far. In fact, Minburī might be too far if labor manifested its normal celerity as the case of the two teachers showed, or if complications had developed. Furthermore, a Chinese resident of Bang

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friends to say positively that they cannot and will not endure it. For such, some other course has to be taken by the use of ...medicines" (p. 81).[74]

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The most noticeable modification in the customs of childbirth was the shortened fire-rest which had shifted from 29 or so days, to 9 to 15 or less; this was practiced by everyone.[75] Another conspicuous change adopted by a few dozen persons was the substitution for the open fire of a heat-making contrivance, in particular the hot-ashes or charcoal burning container (chamber or fire-box: *fai chut*) and the hot water bottle. (The hot brick and wrapped pot of hot salt were probably old alternatives.) New, of course, were the occasional utilization of the Minburi Health Center; the second class doctors; and, somewhat more generally, the novelties of the market, such as flowered net-frames, mits, shirts, pillowcases, and pacifiers. There were a few other changes noted.

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Who took up the innovations? First, they were women who had already successfully borne a child, undergone a full fire-rest, and were bearing their second or later children. Being already ritually mature (*suk*) and of proven competence in childbearing, they had no reason to fear a change and nothing to lose. Age and experience gave them the self-confidence, authority, and interest to ponder their experience and decide on ways to increase their effectiveness and their comfort. They had the right to do so because of the fundamental autonomy of the individual. Strong-minded old ladies might criticise the substitution of the hot-ashes container for the fire, feeling it was not hot enough to do the job, but they never questioned the woman's right to do so. The least likely to adopt

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74. On the other hand, Bradley (pp. 82-83) was puzzled why his success in saving the life of so revered a personage as the Queen by taking her off the fire, a move so thoroughly approved by the King, did not cause universal abandonment of the fire-rest. He was not aware that many a mo did the same (with the possible exception of the sponging with tepid water), that as a mo-with-a-particular-specialty he could do anything he wanted but no one would copy it without personal formal authorization, and that he was up against the deeply-rooted rite of female maturation concerning which even royalty had no authority (Bangkok Calendar, 1871:197-199).

75. We have no data on whether this shortening process set in in the 1930's, or after World War II in the late 1940's. The month-long rest was universal in the 1920's.

178 a new way was a woman bearing her first child because she
184 was not yet ritually matured. This she wanted to be.
312 Moreover, her self-interest led her to try to profit as
846 much as possible from the experience of elders by first
885 following the old way. By incorporating the experience of successful child-bearers into her own and the baby's life and by asking them to initiate actions suspiciously, she augmented by that much her own competence, and laid the groundwork for her future progress. Self-responsibility engendered respect for elders. Thus there was no split between old and young over innovations. Experience gave grounds both for conservatism and for changing, but at different age levels.

178 Secondly, changes were adopted by the rich who,
184 spending their money rather conspicuously, sought to main-
556 tain and enhance their social position. Their wealth and position were in themselves unquestioned as signs of merit earned in another incarnation.

178 The changes being introduced to Bang Chan were of two
554 kinds: first the prestigeful, and second, those giving no increment of esteem, i.e. idiosyncratic changes of taste or convenience; or those reflecting individual circumstances. The prestigeful innovations were oriented towards the use of market novelties, modern medical care, urban standards of cleanliness and beauty, and other ways termed "progressive" associated with the city of Bangkok, cynosure of the eyes of the rich. These values were leading certain families away from their original occupation of farming, into the fields of teaching, trading, carpentering, cottage-industry, etc. Since these new occupations brought in steady cash and large land holders, too, had a good income, an association was found of
372 wealth, prestige, urban interests, and innovation. Com-
846 ment on the hot ashes container (fai chut) indicated that
178 it was a strong symbol of prestige and progress. To use it was "to get away from ignorance and the old way of doing things." It was "cleaner, not hot or ugly, and more convenient." One teacher took it up after reading an advertisement in the newspapers that described glowingly its more efficient healing effect. On the other hand, one woman abandoned the fai chut because "it was not hot enough to rid her of stiff muscles," so she went back to the use of the fire. "It is all right for rich Bangkok ladies who want to avoid a scar, but it does not give
177 enough strength for a farmer." She had no urban preten-
178 sions. Also in this prestigeful aggregate, observed here
278 and there, were the market novelties mentioned above:
854 bed, mat, and mosquito net instead of the plank-bed; kits of medicine from the Chinese pharmacist instead of the old

25| which did not attract them could be left anywhere out of reach of dogs. Raw rice was stored in a large jar or oil can while salt, fermented fish, shrimp paste[1] and fishsoy[1] were kept in smaller jars or bottles. Such containers were customarily covered. Dried food materials such as onions, garlic, chili peppers and other seasonings were often kept in a basket hung from the roof. Paddy, i.e. unhusked rice, was kept in a large bin of matting or wood, the excess sometimes simply piled on an uncovered mat on the floor.

125 Descriptions of two kitchens, one in a relatively prosperous household and one in a poorer home in Bang Chan, are included in excerpts from field notes, Appendix A, p. 93.

312 In a few homes, a clay water jar was kept in the kitchen or nearby, but more frequently foods were washed, and cooking water obtained at the canal or fish pond.

The water level varied between heavy flood and threatened drought. There were no deep wells in the whole area. Rainwater was collected from the roofs and stored in jars, but during the dry season, the canal or fishpond, although low, must supply the needs of the household. In some, drinking water drawn from the fishpond was preferred, and an effort might be made to keep buffalo from wallowing in it, and to avoid contaminating it with fecal or food wastes or by bathing. Others considered the moving water of the canal preferable to pond water.

General Social Factors Affecting Nutritional Level

462 In Bang Chan, most farm and household tasks were shared by men and women. Both sexes plowed, planted, harvested and dealt with rice buyers; managed buffaloes, boats, and children; cooked, fished and cut wood for fuel; hired out as labor hands, "living in" if desired.

554 Though there were clear differences in socio-economic
● 184 status, the daily life of the people was much alike: whether owners of land or renters, whether farming large or small acreages, the rich and the poor worked in the fields at the same tasks, produced or gathered much of their sustenance, and ran out of cash periodically. Socio-economic status was roughly defined in terms of food: a poor man "had one meal only to forego another;" a rich man "had or could get what he wanted to eat." (Sharp et al. 1953, p. 264.)

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1. Description of these products will be found on pp. 17-18.

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canal misjudged his needs for milled rice and ran out, he had to mill his own paddy. Since the main canal was deepened in 1953, year-round transportation of rice by boat has been possible for many more farmers, and this may further decrease the consumption of home-milled rice.

Of 105 households which had and used a home rice mill, 99 used the polishings for feed but no family in Bang Chan used them for human food (Goldsen and Malis, 1957). One farmer, headman of a hamlet, who lived near the main canal and the road to Minburi but who used home-milled rice, offered as the reason that the polishings were good chicken feed, and if he took rice to Minburi to be milled, the miller would keep the polishings.

As reported by Janlekha (1955) consumption of milled rice in 106 households amounted to about 285 kilograms per capita per year or 780 grams per person per day. Such "household consumption" includes "losses to pests and poultry, daily gifts to priests, contributions to temples and outlays for feasts and rites in undetermined but considerable amounts" (Sharp et al., 1953, pp. 265-266).

Flesh Foods Other than Fish. - The people of Bang Chan had a taste and appreciation for flesh food, but the production and use of meat was certainly inhibited by Buddhist tenets which prohibited the taking of life.[1] Killing of poultry, fish, etc. was tolerated among the relatively young, but was considered unsuitable to the aged who should be preoccupied with living virtuously. People felt, however, that the sin of taking life was condoned if they offered part of an animal to the priests.

Since many villagers were unwilling to slaughter buffaloes even when they become aged and useless, such animals were commonly kept until they died. Animals which had died of old age or disease were not, however, regarded by Thai Buddhists in Bang Chan as unfit for human consumption. Usually they were cut up and given to the priests. When the buffalo belonging to one family (Household 67)[2] participating in the dietary survey died, some of the meat was used fresh for curry, much

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1. Meat such as water buffalo and pork as well as fish was sold by venders. Since meat was relatively expensive and was usually used in small amounts with other foods, it was offered for sale in chunks which no longer resembled the living animal. Seeing such small quantities spared the sensibilities of the Buddhists who were thus removed a step from the killing. Actual butchering was done by Moslems or Chinese who did not object.

2. Households were identified by numbers assigned by lot.

was given away fresh to selected kin and friends, including those who helped to butcher, and the remainder was salted and dried. Of this, 7 kg. were kept and 5 kg. sold. Moslems are forbidden to eat an animal with two or four legs which "dies," although eating dead locusts or fish is not forbidden. Some Moslems in Bang Chan reported offering dead animals to Buddhists in barter for other materials.

Oxen, a sign of prosperity, were bought as calves by the Moslems and fattened for meat, usually with a ceremony in mind. In 1955 (Goldson and Ralis, 1957) only 5 householders in Bang Chan raised hogs, and 4 of these had 1 or 2 only. Moslems ate no pork. A permit from the district officer was necessary for slaughtering a buffalo or an ox but not for hogs. Natural deaths of such animals were supposed to be reported.

Poultry was not commonly used for food in Bang Chan. It was the poor man's "feast" food suitable for guests. One couple in the lowest income level killed one chicken or a duck once a year to provide the traditionally good meal for their cooperative harvest helpers. Others, better off, might serve chicken especially at men's dinners. Pigeons were raised for sale in the market by one Moslem family. In 1953-54, one person was trying to raise a few turkeys for sale, as word had reached Bang Chan that turkeys were in demand for foreigners' holiday dinners. By 1957 turkey-raising for cash was spreading, but some villagers objected to having them around "because they look like vultures and bring misfortune."

Various wild creatures were used for food whenever they were caught. Turtle curry was considered a great delicacy, but as turtles, which could be caught from May to February, brought a good price in Bangkok, experts usually sold their catch. Frogs and turtles were sometimes kept in a jar until needed. Eels, frogs, cobra and other snakes were used for curry. Field rats, available all year, were roasted.

Fish. - Next to rice, fish constituted the most abundant food in the diet in Bang Chan. Either fresh or preserved,[1] they were available throughout the year. Killing

1. According to observation in 1952-54, fish caught in excess of immediate needs were preserved for later use. Serpentheads ((1)plaa (3)chanaum), which are about 7 or 8 inches long, and pilot fish ((1)plaa (2)sa-(2)lid), about 4 or 5 inches long, were commonly salted and dried. Heads and tails were removed and the fish were split open and salted overnight. The following morning the fish were washed and spread on fiber trays in the sun to dry. Some excess fish might be dried at anytime of year, but larger quantities were done during the hot, dry season. The process was usually complete within a week.

contaminated drinking water, but the traditional use of boiled water for newborn infants and their mothers, and its occasional use for sick persons, might provide the starting point for a desirable change.

Meal Preparation and Service

Processes and Equipment

The principal processes involved in food preparation for which equipment was required are: cutting solid food into bite-size pieces, pounding spices and flavoring materials, grating coconut, straining, boiling, sauteing in a small amount of fat, steaming, and roasting on a stick or metal support over the fire. Although foods were steamed or roasted only occasionally, the processes were familiar to all.

The Thai kitchen had no oven. When the term "baked" was used, it might mean cooking with dry heat on a rack over the fire (as banana baked in the skin) or without fat in the frying pan (as small dried fish toasted in this way).

Equipment used during meal preparation by the 11 families observed on 44 survey days is listed in Appendix A, p. 96, that used in serving and eating food, on p. 96.

The type of food preparation and service was much the same in the relatively well-to-do and the poorer households in Bang Chan. The chief difference in equipment for food preparation and service in families of different economic status was in the number of items of one kind which were owned. Thus a poor family might own one knife and one clay water jar, whereas an affluent family would probably own several knives and a number of water jars. Equipment used on special occasions, as in preparation of food for large numbers of people, was owned by well-to-do families only. Some had enough equipment for large cooperative work parties.

Persons Responsible for Food Preparation

Food was usually prepared by the homemaker and/or older daughter, if one were at home, but all members of the family who were old enough to help, had some knowledge of food preparation and did prepare food as the occasion demanded. While preparing, cooking and serving food were more frequently carried out by women than by men, adults and school-age children of both sexes had some competence in this area. While certain activities are normally assigned to men and others to women, the Thai maintain no rigid compartmentalization and are unembarrassed when a woman does a man's job or a man does

Attitudes Toward Food

To older Bang Chan residents, to lack rice was to starve even though fish or vegetable fare were at hand. Since rice was the staff of life, many important customs clustered about it. Ceremonies to the Rice Goddess accompanied the raising, selling, and storing of rice. When the unhusked rice was in the bin, it could not be withdrawn at any time as needed, but astrological charts had to be consulted to make sure the day was auspicious. Paddy could never be withdrawn on Friday, a day sacred to the Rice Goddess. After cooking, the best rice was said to be at the mouth of the pot, so this was offered on ceremonial occasions. Important rules were that when cooking rice, the cover of the pot must never be laid in a mortar and it must be inverted, never laid down flat; otherwise one would be short of rice. One must never scrape the top of the rice with the cover, or the "soul" of the rice would be scraped out of the pot. Moslem residents murmured an Arabic prayer every time the rice was put into the pot, and every time the pot was put onto the fire, as well as before eating.

Rice has been generally regarded as the strength-giving food par excellence. A portion of Chutima's (1939) description of the "old system" follows:

> Our children and young women are forbidden by ancient doctrine from eating any fair quantity of animal products, but must eat plenty of rice which is considered as the only true food, the others being only appetizers. And to stimulate the palate, large quantities of hot and irritating condiments (chilies and peppers principally) are consumed at every meal. Some vegetables, boiled or raw, are also included, but in small quantities in spite of abundant supply.

The quotation indicates first that in the past, rice was considered much more important as food than the "with-rice" dishes. Since the Food and Drug Division of the Ministry of Public Health has been attempting to encourage the eating of more "with-rice," the attitudes found in Bang Chan are of interest. One informant stated that only rice can make children fat, and that the "hot taste" foods help them to eat more rice. Another commented that rice makes children strong, and "with-rice" makes them weak. Another, a mother of seven children, said that if babies were given too much "with-rice" they would be potbellied. The more modern view was expressed by an informant who said that a certain child ate only rice with fish, and was weak; he refused vegetables and banana. One affluent farmer, an elderly man whose orphaned grandchild was being raised on cow's milk (evaporated or dried milk, diluted with boiled water) expressed the opinion that the ancient belief was based on thrift. He said that thrifty

435 Some information as to the cost in baht of the larger
736 ceremonies held in 1954, and their scale, was obtained from
[124] the school teacher's diary. Examples follow:

[742] Ordination: Total cost 8,000, including food 1400, liquor 800. Guests contributed 4000.

[852] Top-knot tonsure: Total cost 1550, including new utensils 550; 6 priests fed; each priest given 12 baht; 12 (2)pin-(1)toos filled to take to the temple; 100 duck eggs donated, and 300 baht received from 30-40 guests.

[744] Cremation[1]: Total cost 40,000[2], including about 10,000 for food; 61 priests fed[3]. About 500 guests contributed 4377.

[875] Homage-to-the-teacher ritual:
A: Total cost 715, including food 565 and liquor 150; 40 tang (800 liters) fish and 3 tang Chinese noodles donated.
B: Total cost, 11,000[4].

[585] Wedding: A: Thai Buddhist: Total cost 5000. Guests gave 2300.
[583] B: Rite of forgiveness after elopement: a meal, with 5 bottles of liquor.
[184] C: Moslem: 2 buffalo slaughtered. 400 guests.

585 Arranged marriages could be large merit-making affairs,
262 with a huge procession from one house to the other of twenty-
[583] four "pairs" of specified foods, i.e. two bearers each of sugar cane, fruits, sweetmeats and other things. At more modest weddings and the rite of forgiveness for a couple who had eloped, food might differ from the usual fare only by including the three essentials of a wedding: pork, chicken and alcohol.

273 Increased consumption of alcoholic beverages during the
796 ceremonial season was indicated by the sales of one local
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1. Cremation was the last of several rites at death. Private 7-day, 30-day and 100-day rites were held, when priests came to the home to chant and to be feasted.

2. With cooperative assistance from well-situated relatives in Bangkok.

3. The whole chapter of priests from Wat Bang Chan
[792] was always included at cremations, and often others from a
[574] distance.

4. See list of food purchased, Appendix A, pp. 102-103.

storekeeper: about 800-900 liter bottles per month during the 3 months dry season as compared to about 350 bottles per month during the 9 months of the rice season.

Moslems never served liquor at their weddings, cremations, and other auspicious events. Moslem residents occasionally attended Buddhist (l)ngaan in spite of dietary proscriptions that Buddhists did not observe.[1] A medium (spiritualist) commented however that because pig's head was essential for her homage-to-the-teacher rites, some Moslem sick persons preferred to go to the Buddhist temple for treatment. There the priest-practitioner could afford to set up a separate kitchen for his Moslem patients, and so spare them the distress of confronting pork. To one big ordination Moslem guests brought their own food. Buddhists came somewhat more often to Moslem ceremonies.

We do not have enough information to appraise the nutritional significance of food eaten at ceremonies. Some individuals got a great deal of it, others very little. One must remember that the (l)ngaan was not a public but a private event at home, to which guests came on invitation. Although cremations and the teacher-rites of priest-practitioners were held at the temple, and so had a semi-public character, no one who was not invited presented himself for food. Of the participants, the working group undoubtedly received the most food; they were there the longest time, had regular meals, tastings and snacks throughout the (l)ngaan meal itself. This group comprised the host, co-sponsors and their immediate kin; other relatives and friends who were asked or who volunteered to help. The feeling was, if one were "very fond" of the host, one volunteered to cook. If less close, one was invited as a guest, but made the usual cash donation. Sociable persons combining skill and energy were invited often and volunteered often, hence spent many days at ceremonies. Young unmarried men and women were asked and liked to be asked to work, for such occasions offered a great chance for fun and flirting.

Different degrees of participation may be estimated from Janlekha's (1955) figures for reported contributions ranging from 30 to 1000 baht in a year. Since a contribution of 5 to 10 baht per (l)ngaan was customary, the villager with the lowest reported contribution probably attended from 3 to 6 ceremonial occasions. Attendance at 100 or more (l)ngaan is unlikely, hence the villager who gave as much as 1000 baht probably made larger contributions per (l)ngaan.

What sort of persons or groups in the village were invited as guests? Every host's list included his older

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1. Moslems were said to resist army service because they were afraid they would have to eat pork.

per day were calculated for Groups A and B by Round and for all survey days (24 days for 6 families in Group A, 20 for 5 families in Group B). The total amounts eaten per capita per day, of various food groups, and the relative nutrient contributions of these groups were also calculated.

Results and Discussion

Socio-Economic Situation of the Two Groups of Families Studied

General Socio-Economic Conditions. - In the course of the study the observers were able to obtain information, both by inquiry and direct observation, on the economic condition of the families. Questions about land holdings, the amount of land farmed, number of working buffaloes owned, number of priests to whom food was given and sources of income, were asked during the second Round of the survey, after the participants were acquainted with both the field workers and the procedures. As raw foods were weighed, the observer asked if they were home grown or prepared, and recorded the cost of foods purchased.

Although our sample was not stratified with respect to economic condition, the families in Group B, i.e. those chosen for apparently better nutriture, proved to be more prosperous than those in Group A (Table 8). With the exception of Household 222 in Group A, rice production was the main source of income. Families in Group B had a greater capital investment in land and buffalo, and worked more land, having more productive hands per family available. Farm work was finished sooner, hence members could begin intensive fishing earlier than in Group A. All children aged 13-15, in both groups, did light farm work and/or selling in market, cooking, baby tending and care of buffalo. In all households, husband or wife or both came from old families in the community, hence had extensive kinship relations.

From the viewpoint of parents, the "peak of life" was the time when children were no longer dependent, but productive, unmarried workers whose earnings stayed within the family. Household 16 was such a family, forward looking, progressive and optimistic. The successful and respected couple in Household 25 would enter this "peak of life" situation in a few years. Household 20 included a widower and his almost grown daughter living with his younger brother and the latter's family, and their senile mother, in harmonious cooperation. Ample land, housing, buffalo and farm labor combined with other skills, made for good living. In Household 21, two strong, unmarried sons still lived with their elderly parents. The only poor family, of low status, in Group B, was Household 23. By great industry, especially in

[Text continues on page 63 --- Analyst]

Equipment Used For Food Preparation

252 Equipment used for food preparation by 11 families par-
4| ticipating in the dietary study: clay stove; pots and covers
[251] of clay, light weight aluminum, and enameled iron; frying pans, curved, of sheet iron, with home-made wooden handle on one side, or metal handles on opposite sides (shallow clay pans were also used for frying); basins, pails, chopping boards; grater for coconut: a metal, toothed instrument mounted on one end of a low wooden stool (often called a "wooden rabbit" because the seat of the stool might be shaped like a rabbit); mortar of pottery or stone; wooden pestle; fiber strainers usually with rigid handles, to hold them in place on top of a pot; a large-bladed all-purpose knife; in some households, one or more smaller knives; metal turner, with home-made wooden handle; spoons, with bowls of coconut shell, gourd or wood; tin cans for dipping, measuring rice, etc.; fiber trays used for winnowing rice, for drying food, storing dried chilies, onions, etc.; metal tray for serving food to priests, and for household use; baskets for storing food; (5)faa-(1)chii, or fiber cover, to keep flies and insects off cooked food; large earthenware water jars.

[194] Other items less often used, and owned by relatively few families in Bang Chan, included: steamer; a perforated clay pot or metal pan with cover, designed to fit tightly into another pot in which water was boiled; large wooden mortar, made of a hollowed tree trunk; spring-type egg beater (a strong spiral spring attached to a stick); scale; glass water jars.

Equipment Used in Serving Food and Eating

249 The equipment for serving and eating food might include:
417 flat bottomed bowls with a deep edge, similar to Western-
415 style soup plates, used as individual rice bowls; plates; small bowls for "with-rice" dishes; sauce dishes with stand, for chili sauce; enameled iron or china spoons (Chinese type) used for serving moist foods; forks, used by some families on special occasions;[1] teapot and cups; large rice bowl for ceremonial use (silver or aluminum); large brass spoon with serpent-tail handle, for serving rice; drinking glasses; tiered lunch pail; canteen; thermos bottle.

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1. A relatively poor family (Sharp et al. 1953, p. 223) had one pair of fork and spoon for eating.

Food for Homage-to-the-Teacher Rite (cont.)

Item	Amount	Cost in Baht
Fruit:		
Bananas ((3)kluaj (4)nam-(4)waa)	5 bun.	from father
Chico[2]		5.
Coconut	150	180.
Coconut (young, to make dessert)	30	30.
Job's tears	1 lit.	3.
Plums, yellow[2]		5.
Pomeloe[2]		6.
Rose apples[2]		2.
Tamarind	–	7.50
Tomato sauce		8.
Young palm fruit[4]	7 bu.	3.
Vegetables (non leafy):		
Bamboo shoots, cooked	1 pa.	28.
Cucumber		--.3
Egg plants		--.3
Garlic	5 kg.	26.50
Gourd, white		1.
Onion, fragrant[5]		6.
Onion[5]	4 kg.	4.
Onion, welsh[5]		--.3
Mushrooms		3.
Radish, white		--.3
Vegetables (leafy green and yellow):		
Cabbages		--.3
Chinese kale		--.3
Chili, green		7.50
Vegetables (leafy green & yellow) cont.:		
Lettuce		--.3
Parsley		--.3
Pumpkin	3 fruits	12.
Sweet basil leaves		1.
Sweet potatoes	6 kg.	6.
(3)Tang-(5)oo		--.3
Seasonings etc.:		
Vinegar	1 bottle	1.
Fishsoy	1 jar	10.
(2)Ka-(1)chaaj	2½ kg.	12.50
Sodium glutamate		5.
Pepper		14.
Agar	400 gms.	36.
Miscellaneous:		
Cola beverage	72 bottles	72.
Liquor	16 bottles	80.[6]
Ice		30.
Cigarettes	2 pkgs.	--.6
Tobacco	1 heap	--.6
Betel pepper		9.
Fresh areca nut		10.
Dried areca nut		8.
Dried palm leaves	1 big bundle	2.
Firewood		50.
	Total	1577.75

1. For Moslem guests.
2. Food items placed on a tray and used in the ceremony proper.
3. Items so marked cost a total of 140 baht.
4. Not identified.
5. Several kinds of onions, both fresh and dried, are commonly used.
6. Prices not stated; estimate for liquor.

NOTES ON THE PREPARATION AND NUTRITIVE VALUE OF COCONUT MILK AND COCONUT CREAM

252 The term coconut cream ((5)hua (2)ka-(4)thi), as it
262 was used in Thailand, referred to the product which was made by squeezing grated coconut with little or no addition of water. Coconut milk ((4)naam (2)ka-(4)thi) was made by squeezing grated coconut repeatedly with water. Coconut cream might be made first, and the residue extracted one or more additional times to obtain coconut milk. The terms coconut milk and coconut cream apparently are not used consistently. Losee (1952) commented on this when he described the preparation of coconut cream in Samoa, and said that it was sometimes called coconut milk. Miller et al. (1936), in describing the preparation of coconut milk said "If a thick coconut milk to serve over puddings, taro leaves, etc. is desired, 1/2 to 3/4 cup of coconut water or boiling water should be poured over 3 cups of grated coconut. . . . If the milk is to be used in curry sauce for chicken, eggs, shrimps, or in cornstarch pudding, a larger quantity of water (1 to 2 cups of water to 3 cups of grated coconut) may be used."

126 In carrying out the dietary study, the observer weighed the grated coconut meat, the residue and the final products, coconut milk or cream, or both. She did not weigh the water as it was added in successive portions, but the amount of added water could be calculated.

194 The ratio of coconut milk to meat varied considerably,
262 but on the average, households in Group A obtained coconut milk which weighed more than eight times as much as the coconut meat from which it was made. Households in Group B obtained less than 2½ times as much milk by weight as coconut meat. The number of extractions made varied from 2 to 6,
146 with a mode of 3. Obviously, the products made by Groups A
171 and B, although both called coconut milk, had markably differ-
262 ent percentage composition, and neither was similar to "coconut milk" for which values could be found. These values were as follows:

Authors	Location	Coconut milk grams per 100 gm. E. P. Pro.	Fat	Carbo.
Bocobo et al.	Philippine Islands	3.6	33.2	38.4
Food and Drug Division	Thailand	3.52	34.75	1.52
Miller et al.	Hawaii	4.0	27.0	18.91

1. Personal communication

Breast Feeding.

853 a.184 As previously noted breast feeding was the rule. One child in this series, whose mother died when he was 5 days old, was never breast fed but was given canned or dried milk[1] diluted with boiled water. Another infant, whose mother died of tuberculosis when the child was a year old, was weaned at 5 months because of the mother's illness. A few breast fed infants were given cow's milk preparations at times. A child whose mother was a vender had cow's milk daily during the mother's absence; in another instance, cow's milk was given a baby when the mother was at work in a distant field. Whenever practicable, however, mothers apparently returned to the house to nurse the baby or had it brought to the field to be fed. One woman teacher who had a baby during the school year returned to her nearby home at recess to nurse the infant. Two mothers said they gave their infants some cow's milk because they thought their own milk supply was not adequate. One of these was the vender previously mentioned.

Supplementary Feeding of Infants.

853 Infant feeding during the mother's postpartum rest period has already been described (p. 12). After (2)juu (1)faj no mention was made of giving honey in water to babies, but up to about one month of age the only other change in practice which occurred was that two or three mothers started to mix a little rice with the crushed or baked banana which had been started previously. As during the mother's rest period, however, a minority of infants were being given banana, i.e. most of them had nothing except water in addition to mother's milk.

By 3 months of age about half of the infants were being given banana, (3)kluaj (4)nam-(4)waa, and mixing rice with it was more common. A few infants were being given rice as such. In most instances, for infants up to 6 months of age, rice was cooked with extra water and mashed, (3)khaaw (2)piag, a preparation which was considered baby food. Rice water with sugar was added to the soupy rice for one infant less than 3 months old

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[234] 1. No fresh milk of any kind was available in Bang Chan. Water buffaloes were ordinarily not bred in the village and use of buffalo milk was unheard of. Among the light refreshments which could be bought at village stores, however, were coffee with condensed milk and diluted canned milk. Storekeepers stocked imported canned and dried milk including some brands designed for infant feeding. Directions for use were not in Thai, however, and the preparations actually fed to infants were often diluted more than recommended.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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Houses in the village vary considerably in appearance: from the bamboo and thatch dwellings of the poorest families to the sturdy, great gabled houses of teak built by Bang Chan's original settlers to the tiled and corrugated iron-roofed homes of the newly rich. Most, however, follow the traditional Siamese pattern of being built on posts two to ten feet off the ground, mainly as a protection against flood waters. Many homes in Bang Chan give the impression of being permanently unfinished, the bamboo houses because they require constant refurbishment, the wooden dwellings because they are made of teak which seasons best when left untreated and exposed directly to the elements. The merging upper-class urban pattern of painting teakwood has not yet reached Bang Chan.

The major thoroughfare of the community, bisecting it in a north-south direction and perpendicular to the Bangkok-Minburi highway, is Khlɔɔŋ (or Canal) Bang Chan, which links with Khlɔɔŋ Sɛɛn Sɛɛb three kilometers south of the village. The latter, dug in the 1840's and originally intended as a military route to the Cambodian frontier, is one of several major canals dug during the mid-nineteenth century as part of the vast canal system that was constructed in the Central Plain when the region was opened for commercial rice production. Together with the highway built since World War II, a one-hour bus ride to the capital, Khlɔɔŋ Sɛɛn Sɛɛb, provides the villagers with their major access to Bangkok and the rest of the Central Plain. By motorboat a trip to Bangkok via this large, bustling canal takes approximately three hours.

Despite these relatively good communications facilities and the long-standing Thai peasant tradition to *paj thiaw* ("to go around"—for fun, on visits, pilgrimages, often for long distances) few people outside the immediate vicinity of the village have ever heard of Bang Chan. The community is neither a landmark nor is it located near one; it is not famed for any activities (other than having become the research site for the "American professors"); and because it is not a spatially integrated village, Bang Chan cannot even be found on any map of Thailand. Like most Thai settlements, Bang Chan has a Buddhist monastery and a government elementary school. It is these two structures that give the village its identity and the local people a sense of belonging to a community. People say that they live "at home in Bang Chan" because they make their merit at the monastery of Bang Chan and send their children to the Bang Chan school. Approximately five square miles in size and inhabited by 1,771 people living in 296 households (1956 village census), Bang Chan seems in physical appearance and social significance like the thousands of other communities that dot the rice fields of the great Central Plain.

To what extent Bang Chan may be considered "typical" in an analytic sense of other villages of the Mɛɛnaam Valley, or even of the country as a

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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essentials not atypical of the region. Instead of villages being organized administratively on the basis of natural social groupings and demarcations—that is, social centers and groups with which people feel a primary identification, in Bang Chan's case the local Buddhist monastery and government primary school—so that governmental and social units are isomorphic, they are gerrymandered into highly arbitrary administrative units. Thus the village of Bang Chan is comprised of seven *muubaan* or hamlets, at the head of which are seven hamlet headmen; these hamlets are located in two different *tambon*, or communes (four in one commune, three in the other) headed by two commune headmen, neither of whom lives in Bang Chan; the two communes are located in two different districts headed by two different district officers and their staffs; the two districts fortunately are in a single province, Phranakhoon, the same administrative unit in which the metropolis of Bangkok is located. Yet the people who reside in these varying hamlets located in different communes and districts all perceive themselves as living in the single village of Bang Chan. The fundamental organizational problem here is that since the sources and lines of governmental authority do not follow the lines of the natural Bang Chan community, jurisdictional conflicts and confusions arise to threaten the effectiveness of those community-wide programs that occasionally may be initiated. For example, during a diphtheria immunization campaign in the village (Hanks and Hanks 1955), the public health officer from one of the district offices was reluctant to immunize all the children of Bang Chan on the grounds that some of them came from hamlets outside his district's jurisdiction; he yielded, as the Hankses note, only when a perceptive villager pointed out that if germs knew no boundaries why should he?

Not all villages of the Central region have such real or potential administrative difficulties. (And Bang Chan does not have them too frequently either, principally because the government does not initiate too many community service programs.) However, the basic organizational principle which admits them—that houses are grouped together as administrative "villages" on the basis of conceptual neatness rather than socially functional criteria—is a common feature of the administrative structure of the Central Plain.

The foregoing account describes some basic culture patterns which Bang Chan shares with other villages of either the region or the nation. In addition to these broader patterns, Bang Chan has certain traits which inevitably refer to local village conditions and contingencies. For example, the most active and viable social unit in Bang Chan beyond the familial level is the order of Buddhist monks associated with the monastery. It is the only organization within the village that has been successful in mobilizing community activity (Sharp *et al.* 1953), although much of this activity has

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
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Thailand AO1

been religious in nature—getting the assistance of villagers to construct monks' cubicles or repairing the small rest pavilions near the monastery, the "pay" for which is Buddhist merit—or, if secular, infused with sacred attributes, such as when the head monk helped raise funds for the construction of the Bang Chan school by supporting the notion that villagers who gave money to the school would make merit. It is clear, however, that the organizational vigor of the Bang Chan monkhood is mainly a function of the aggressive personality and leadership of Bang Chan's particular abbot, and that with a more retiring, contemplative head monk—a not uncommon or undesirable role for an abbot—the situation would be strikingly different.

In a similar vein, it is difficult to link the incidence of land ownership and tenancy in Bang Chan with any consistent national or regional pattern. At the national level, Thailand is fortunate among predominantly peasant nations in having a comparatively low level of land tenancy, an estimated 80 percent of the cultivated land of the country being owned by the small, independent farmers who work it (National FAO Committee of Thailand 1949). However, within these broad, national parameters there is considerable inter- and intra-regional variation. Zimmerman's study in the early 1930's indicated that the number of peasants without land ranged from 14 percent in Southern Thailand, through 27 percent in the North, to 36 percent in the Central Plain. These regional figures seemed to have remained relatively constant through the years in that deYoung (1955) reports a tenancy figure of 27.7 percent for a village in the North which he studied in 1949, and Janlekha (1955) indicates a figure of 37 percent for Bang Chan, in the Central Plain, in 1953.[4] As close as the Bang Chan figure may seem to its regional average, however, it is of little significance when seen against the background of variability that exists within the region as a whole: for example, in villages near the city of Lopburi, only 12 percent of the villagers are landless, but in the Khlong Rangsit area, not far

[4] It should be noted, however, that other indices of economic well-being in Bang Chan have not remained constant. To the extent that his historical materials permit, Janlekha (1955) points out that land holdings have become increasingly smaller, the amount of time newly-married couples must live with one set of parents (in order to accumulate the capital necessary for setting up their own neolocal households) longer, and the price of land higher. Janlekha's data indicate that in the five-year period between 1948 and 1953 alone, the price of agricultural land, as contrasted with considerably more expensive residential land, in and around Bang Chan increased 560 percent!

It is also well to keep in mind Janlekha's observation that, depending upon familial circumstances such as number of children and availability and proximity of labor, a Bang Chan farmer who rents a large plot of land from a benevolent absentee landlord, who is often unfamiliar with Bang Chan crop values, may be considerably better off economically than a farmer who works a small plot of land that is all his own.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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from Bang Chan, the figure is as high as 85 percent (Dobby 1950). In these terms, therefore, it is best to view the incidence of land tenancy in Bang Chan as largely a function of local, historical circumstances.

A final word should be said about Bang Chan's proximity and accessibility to Bangkok—the cornucopia of so much that is new, interesting, and desirable (if somewhat equivocally) to most Siamese peasants. It is clear that Bang Chan's closeness to the capital creates certain conditions that would not be present in a community situated, for example, 200 kilometers, instead of 31 kilometers, from the nation's largest city. Simply on practical grounds, this nearness to the city permits the villagers to take advantage of opportunities—economic, recreational, and religious—which those living in distant provinces can obtain only after serious consideration of the financial and psychological expenses involved: "Do I have shoes to wear in the city? Do they treat people from the provinces well? With whom will I stay? Do I have the train fare?" A Bang Chaner who visits the capital does not have to make such financial or emotional commitments, since it is only a one hour, three and one-half baht (seventeen and one-half cents) bus ride back home, although many do share with their up-country cousins the peasant's apprehensions about city manners.

The attractions of Bangkok take several forms: off-season jobs, medical care, kinship ties, special schools, great market places, famed monasteries or fairs, and the many other places where one can go to have fun. A survey conducted in Bang Chan during 1955 (Goldsen and Ralis 1957) indicates that 62 percent of all household heads in the village visited Bangkok more than twice during the year for just such purposes. (Twenty-one percent had not gone to Bangkok at all, and 23 percent had gone more than ten times.) Many villagers, particularly younger men, attracted by the promise of regular wages, lighter work, and the bright lights of the city, leave Bang Chan with the hope that they will never have to return, although of course many do. The Goldsen-Ralis survey reveals that 26 percent of their respondents had lived in Bangkok for a year or more, although for most this was in fulfillment of military service.

Living in Bangkok is not something that is desired in and of itself. Bang Chaners are keenly aware of the disadvantages of city living—particularly its great expense and insecurity—and are impressed only by those individuals who have made a success out of their urban sojourn. Most would agree that a Bangkok coolie, for all his exposure to the wonders of the modern world, lives a considerably less attractive life than they do.

The frequent transit between Bang Chan and Bangkok,[8] however,

[8] Of less practical consequence than their direct personal experiences and word-of-mouth contacts, but not to be ignored, are the villagers' contacts with Bangkok by way of radio, newspapers, books, and of course by way of what their children bring

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bangchan

121 experience outside the community, from persons who had
621 never before seen any foreigner to others familiar with Bangkok or smaller centers of modernizing influence; (11) prospects of a fair degree of physical security from robbery or other violence during the study; and (12) the promise of excellent cooperation on the part of both peasants and officials of the region.[2]

121 A majority of the sites visited or heard about during the preliminary survey proved unsatisfactory for one or more of the following reasons: (1) they were too specialized (fruit or truck gardening, brick or pottery making, proximity of a naval establishment, preponderance of non-Thai or non-Buddhist groups); (2) they consisted of amorphous groups of sub-marginal tenant farmers exhibiting marked signs of social disorganization; or, most commonly, (3) they were decentralized and the dispersal of homesteads along canals would have required an inordinate amount of research time spent in moving about in order to communicate with the people.[3]

121 Although caution has been exercised to select a com-
• 184 munity most closely approximating a representative village
*243 of the Central Plain, we do not purport that economic conditions described in Bangchan are identical with those of other villages in the region. Bangchan's representativeness

2. Lauriston Sharp, "First Progress Report on Cornell Thailand Project, August 1-November 1, 1948", p. 2. (Mimeographed.)

3. Ibid., p.2.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)1956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bangchan

121 can later be checked through studies in a nearby control
184 village and by comparison with results of the 1953 agri-
243 cultural census. Nevertheless most of the problems of rural rice growing communities in central Thailand undergoing technological changes are expected to be found in Bangchan. We are confident, therefore, that the community is an appropriate model for locating agrarian problems and is a good site for a pilot study which is to serve as a base-line for further researches in agricultural economics and other social sciences.

Techniques for Establishing Rapport

123 Our first contact with Bangchan residents was made on September 1, 1948, when Professor Lauriston Sharp and the author were driving home from Minburi. We stopped over at a farm house on the side of Minburi Road two miles from the market town and introduced ourselves to a small gathering of farmers. We told them that we were both teachers, Sharp teaching in the United States and Janlekha in the nearby Kasetsat University, and that we were looking for a typical village where "Professor Sharp might study the real life of Thai farmers so that he could tell his American students how we live and work."

The place where the conversation was taking place was on the periphery of Bangchan village -- the western tip of Hamlet 4, Bangchan Commune. While one of the farmers was explaining the general condition to us, he was interrupted

The Family

592 Although the family is the smallest of social institutions, it occupies first rank in importance. For the purpose of this study family is defined as a group of persons who form a household under one head including parents, children, servants and other dependents. It is a social unit for both consumption and production. In Bangchan, members [264] [464] [463] of the same family, with the possible exception of piece-workers who have the privilege of eating with their employers only during periods of certain kinds of work, usually share the same meal although not necessarily at the same time. Physically able members are expected to contribute to family work although some may also do extra jobs for their own pocket money. In all cases family work has priority over the extra job, and in most cases members turn over all or part of the [354] earning thus realized to the family head. Although most [184] families have seperate dwellings, there are instances of two families sharing the same dwelling but having seperate cooking arrangement. Such cases are rare, however. According [464] [463] to our operational definition, then, a member of a biological family who has hired himself out as regularly hired laborer ceases to be a member of his own biological family and becomes a member of his employer's family. Piece workers, on the other hand, although they may occasionally eat with their employers, still retain membership of their biological family if they still live with them. Finally, people who live in the same dwelling may not belong to the same family if they

583 of their adopted daughter, of which some 300 baht went to
535 bedding materials and 5,000 baht to the wedding feast which
435 the bride's parents alone were supposed to give. It should be noted, however, that in the last case the bride's parents received as dowry from the bridegroom's parents 4,000 baht in cash and two baht[9] weight of gold worth about a thousand baht, and they also received from the guests an aggregate customary contribution of 2,360 baht. Thus, the bride's parents came out with a net gain of 1,060 baht plus the gold which was to be given to the bride.

583 While the conventional marriage was somewhat costly especially for the bridegroom's party, the popular marriage by elopement was much less expensive. Our records show that in addition to nominal ceremonial materials of white cloth, candles and incense, the bridegroom had to pay a fine of only a few hundred baht to his wife's parents when the couple came to receive formal forgiveness from them.

We do not have comparative figures for the occurrence of conventional marriage and elopement, but the latter appeared very frequently in our daily field notes as against very few cases of the former.

581 There are two types of establishment of new families
184 after marriage: (a) immediately after marriage, and (b) some years after staying with parents of either party.

It was observed that immediate establishment of new families after marriage was common among couples originating from farm laboring families and families of poor farm operators.

[304] 9. One baht weight is equivalent to fifteen grams.

7: Janiekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bangchan

591 A probable explanation was that the poor had nothing to
• 184 gain from staying for a few years with parents after marriage. More important still was that with limited working land, presumably rented, the parents also did not get any economic benefit from the couple, whose stay with the family meant extra mouths to feed rather than extra hands to work.

Immediate establishment of new families was also observed in some couples originating from well-to-do families. This was nevertheless rare, because in the present economic condition it was rather difficult to find families rich enough to provide for the immediate establishment of a new family. The general pattern, then, was to let the couple accumulate for themselves while getting the benefit of free board and lodging from the parents. This period of stay with the parents with the intention for accumulation for future establishment may be called the 'nascent period'.

591
178 Table 7 shows that 30 out of 96 families of farm
184 operators covered by the study were able to establish their nuclear families immediately after marriage. When these 96 farm operators were grouped according to their dates of marriage to the present spouses or last spouses in cases of widowers and widows, the distribution was as follows: those married during the absolute monarchy regime (up to 1932), 54; those married during the democratic regime (after 1932), 37; never married, 4; date of marriage not available, 1. Since 20 out of the 30 families which were able to establish themselves immediately were in the first group, the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 85]

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)1956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bangchan

TABLE 7

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF LENGTH OF NASCENT PERIOD OF 96 SAMPLE-FAMILIES
Bangchan, Thailand, 1953

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• 184
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Length in Years	Frequency
0	30
1	16
2	9
3	4
4	4
5	5
6	2
7	0
8	1
9	3
10	2
11-15	3
16-20	1
Not separate*	15
No information	1
Total	96

* These 15 families existed earlier as minor components of the old families. Headship of each family was later assumed by the present family head.

591 proportion for immediate establishment was 20 out of 54 or
184 37 per cent for those married before 1932, and 10 out of
178 37 or only 27 per cent for those married after 1932. A declining trend was thus observed of the ability to establish a new family immediately after marriage.

591 Table 7 also shows that the 'nascent' period of 50
592 families (that had ones) ranged from one to twenty years,
184 averaging four years, the mode being one year, and the median
178 two years. Among the fifteen non-separating families, eight headships were taken over by offspring while one or both of the parents were still alive (we shall call this 'type A'), four headships were taken over by offspring through the death of parents (we shall call this 'type B'), and three headships were taken over by spouses ('type C'). The last mentioned changing over of family headship (type C) occurred in three ways: through marriage of a man to a female head of a family whereby the husband automatically became the family head, death of the husband, and desertion of the husband.

591 The changing over of the family headship of the type
592 B in Table 7 was a natural process of inheritance. In type
184 A, it was found that senility accounted for seven out of
428 eight cases of the changing over, the one exception being
587 the case of a widower who wanted to have a second wife and who thought that the family assets originally belonged to his first wife's biological family and therefore an outside woman should not lay a hand on the 300,000 baht property.

243 parcels by siblings who failed to include their share in those parcels in the reporting of areas owned. For want of a proper basis for adjustment, we chose to let the figures stand as they were reported.

Table 19 shows that the combined area in rice of all the 216 farms in Bangchan was 6,638 rai, or almost 99 per cent of total area planted to rice by the residents, the balance of 84 rai being worked on by residents whose occupations were those other than farm operating. Of these 216 farms, 48 were classified as all owned, 88 part owned, and 80 all rented.

The conventional system of classifying farms according to land tenure into all owned (owner-operator), part-owned (part-owner), and all rented (tenant) should not be used without modification as a classification of economic or social status in population pressure areas where an efficient size farm is usually an exception rather than a rule. In these areas, it does not hold, as it seems to imply, that an owner-operator has a superior economic status than a part-owner and that a part-owner is still in a better economic position than a tenant. There is a wide range in size of farm operation and hence of incomes within these categories.

Within the category of owner-operator, there are major differences in size of operation and hence economic and social status. If a farmer -- to cite a specific case, Farmer A in BC4 -- owns the large area of rice of 235 rai,

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 133a]

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bangchan

182
• 184 he may rent out some and retain only the part he can operate
423 well. In this case he chose to operate 65 rai in 1953,
427 renting out the balance of 170 rai. On the other hand,
554 another farmer -- Farmer B, also in BC4 -- who owns only
*128 a small parcel of nine rai may not be able to rent in additional land to make an efficient size farm. In this case, B was not able to rent in any land and had to work on only nine rai of his own in 1953. In an area of relatively low population pressure, the probability of failure to rent in some more land may be small, but it is not so small in the relatively high population pressure areas such as Bangchan. The difference between farmers owning a small area of land and a large area is so great from the standpoint of economics and social position as to warrant having two sub-divisions of the conventional "owner-operators".

Small "owner-operators" may increase their size of operation by renting in some more land and thus becoming part-owners. These farmers actually improve their socio-economic status if they are able to move from the group of owner-operators into the group of part-owners. To use another concrete example, Farmer B, mentioned in the preceding paragraph, who worked on the nine-rai parcel of his own, does not earn more farm income than Farmer C, also in BC4, who owned 20 rai and still rented in 30 more rai in order that his four family workers including himself might be fully employed with a 50-rai farm.

182
184 c. The family's purchasing power. Certain goods
511 considered as luxuries -- medicine, eggs, pork and beef, and white sugar -- were not consumed by poor families.

184 d. Individual taste and preference. The Moslems
276 would not consume any pork although they had enough money
261 to buy it. Some poor farmers spent more money on curry
182 essence than their more affluent neighbors because they
511 preferred highly flavored dishes, and some tobacco smokers did not spend a cent on tobacco binder because they preferred the home-grown banana leaf binder to the thatch leaf binder which had to be purchased.

182 e. Producing ability of the family. It was observed
511 that those who caught more fish tended to consume more fish
[184] regardless of their financial conditions.

f. Health affected the consumption of medicine.

[431] g. Prestige affected the amount of cash contributions
[476] to neighbors.
[554]

h. Personal habits -- thrift, fun loving, indulgence, like or dislike of liquor -- affected the amount of personal expense.

i. Presence or absence of children of school age in the family affected the consumption of cookies.

Special Expenses

511 By special expenses we mean major items of expenses which do not occur regularly but which may arise in one time or another. Examples: purchases of land, gold and

426 two tang of rice are required to pay at harvest time for one tang of rice borrowed during the cash-scarce work season; and (b) Toq raeng wherein an advanced payment of say 10 - 15 baht is made for a promise to harvest one rai of paddy which normally brings in a cash wage of 25 - 30 baht payable on the day the work is done.

Scarcity of credit and the consequent high interest rates naturally discourage productive investment, for those who need operating capital certainly cannot afford to pay for these high rates of interest and those who have cash at all would do much better by straight lending.

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471
• 184 Scarcity of cash and credit in the village is a blow especially to the marginal farmers who comprise the majority of Bangchan operators. These are farmers with a low index of capital formation potential who are often found among the land-thirsty category of operators. It has been pointed out that farmers with a high index of capital formation potential could more easily adjust their credit situation and thus are able to avoid high interest bearing debts. The marginal farmers, on the other hand, cannot do likewise. Scarcity of cash and credit and its consequences -- high interest rates and discounts and premiums of various forms -- have certainly put these marginal farmers at a most disadvantageous spot of receiving less for the same unit of labor and product and of having to pay more for the same unit of goods. Under this circumstance, the gap between the affluent and the less affluent farmers is ever increasing.